

FAIRY TALES UP-TO-NOW--The Sleeping Beauty



By Wallace Irwin

The lovely Princess Goldy was a very ladylike
Little maid who ruled the classic burg of Jaytown-on-the-Pike,
And as regent of the country she was famed for many a mile,
Enthroned within her palace built "in chaste Colonial style."

It seems the Princess was betrothed Prince Charming for to wed,
The son of Pierpont Charming, Wall Street King and thoroughbred;
So she brought down from the city household servants thirty-four,
(Counting in the janitor and boy attending to the door).

The house was renovated, the trousseau was prepared,
The curtains in the dining room were taken down and aired,
The royal porch was painted white, the steps a neutral gray,
And everything was upside down preparing for the day.

About this time there came to town a man of wrath and hate,
A fell Magician posing as a Walking Delegate,
And he spied the gang of workmen and the nuptial preparations,
And said: "These folks are overworked; I'll give 'em all vacations."

First he went to Princess Goldy, and he said: "It is my fate
To queer the wedding bells, for I'm a Walking Delegate.
I love, adore you, Princess fair of Jaytown-on-the-Pike,
So be my wife or else I'll call a general servants' strike."

The Princess raised a haughty chin and answered him to-wit:
"Not on your cabinet photo, sir, likewise nay-nay and nit!"
And as she left the Delegate he said without a flinch:
"This palace is non-union! Have I foiled her? It's a cinch!"

Then he went to all the servants and whispered just a word—
No more the sound of sweeping brooms and shaking rugs was heard,
No more the dishes rattled in that palace by the Pike;
For joyous Jaytown's royal court was tied up in a strike.

The Princess rushed like one distraught unto the telephone—
Alas! there was a linemen's strike and answer came there none;
Adown the empty stairs she ran, a hansom cab to hail,
But the cabby just yelled "Boycott!" and her tears were no avail.

She saw a little A. D. T. official strolling by,
And said: "Here, Johnnie, take this message to the station—fly!"
But the youngster puffed his cigarette and scornfully said he:
"Go ask de dream book, loidy. You ain't in de Union, see!"

Poor Goldy! She was up against an unaccustomed job.
She sat upon the palace steps and sobbed a noble sob,
While unbeknownst the Delegate sneaked up behind, and hissed
A word that threw her in a trance—he was a hypnotist.

For forty days and nights she lay in that hypnotic trance,
The while the Walking Delegate led Jaytown such a dance.
He tied the urban railroads up, he tied the gas works down,
He drew a magic ring around all factories in town.

When Charming, Jr., heard of this in Gotham far away,
He packed his trunk with bills and sought the sleeping town of Jay;
No fear had he for magic, for the Delegate's foul thrusts—
For wasn't Charming's dad a King who owned a bunch of trusts?

He rolled into the spell-bound burg of Jaytown-on-the-Pike,
And called upon the Delegate who'd brought about the strike,
And thrusting something long and green within the Wizard's hand,
He caused the latter to exclaim: "I think I understand!"

Once more the local street cars rolled, the gas works' whistle blew,
The milk carts rattled on the pave, the shops were opened, too,
The factories along the Pike took on a busy roar,
And everybody soon forgot what he'd been striking for.

The Princess? She was broad awake when Charming struck the town,
(Her trance was wound for forty days, and by itself ran down)—
And the palace court attendants, when the bishop said the word,
Went right on with the wedding, as if nothing had occurred.

The moral of this truthful myth, regardless of the plot,
Is: Love Still Laughs at Delegates, or, Strike While the Iron Is Hot.

Mistake of a Sheep

UNCLE BILLY was a good old soul. He has long
since joined the mourners and crossed the
river Jordan. He had a bald head and a
kindly heart. There were a few patches of "wool,"
however, and perhaps a little pugnacity in his nature.

Uncle Billy was sitting on the woodpile one hot July
afternoon. A little ram, a pet ram, a spoiled little
ram, in fact, was chewing things a short distance away.

It is hard to fix the responsibility. The ram had a
bad reputation at the start. But I don't want to run
him down. His mother had died when he was quite
young. Perhaps his education was conducted along
the right lines, but there is some doubt in my mind.
All you had to do was to shake your fist at that little
ram, if you were afraid of stagnation and possessed an
accident policy. There was something lacking in his
moral make-up—he was a mistake. He seemed to
realize this fact, and accepted the status with philo-
sophical resignation if not diabolical enthusiasm.

On this occasion Fate led his little cloven hoofs
straight toward Uncle Billy's moss-covered throne.
There was a somnolence in the hot sunshine which
caused that faithful servant to forget his trials and
tribulations and to dream of Gabriel and the
Promised Land.

The little ram circled around and viewed him from
the corner of his eye with a suspicious glance. Uncle
Billy was snoring softly. His head drooped forward,
jerked back, and drooped again.

The ram's suspicions were confirmed. He wheeled
on the instant, his sharp hoofs planted squarely in the
dust and his eyes blazing. Uncle Billy nodded again,
and the sunlight glinted upon the bald spot. The

ram answered with a like motion. Again the head
drooped. The movements of the two were identical.
The challenge had been given and accepted.

The little ram lowered his head and stamped the
ground with a nervous hoof. Uncle Billy continued to
nod in blissful ignorance. The ram rose upon his hind
legs and aimed for the shimmering cranium.

Biff! The skulls came together, and the sparks
flew in seventeen different directions. There was a
moment of navy blue atmosphere cut on the bias and
fringed with little red stars, with lace insertion of
skyrockets and Roman candles, carrying a huge bouquet
of American pinwheels, devil-chasers and firecrackers.

The combatants parted as suddenly as they had met.
There was no good morning and no good-by.

After the Fourth of July the little ram was sitting
upon the green grass endeavoring to see his reflection in
a glimmering dew-drop that had vanished with the first
blush of morning. He seemed to find difficulty in
collecting his thoughts. I went up and attempted to
soothe him, but my efforts were not appreciated. He
gave me a reproachful glance, and ambled off toward
the clothes line to forget the occurrence. He had been
up against it.

Uncle Billy resumed his throne. He wore a look of
mingled amusement and pity.

"Po' lit' ram!" I heard him mutter. "Done wan-
dered from de fold and foun' sorrow and tribulation."

And in a moment he was dreaming again of the
pearly gates and the golden harp.

Wills in England

IN the heart of London, facing on one side that
famous thoroughfare known as the Strand, and on
the other looking on the Thames, will be found
Somerset house, once a private palace but now devoted
to various departments of the inland revenue of Great
Britain.

Perhaps the most interesting government depart-
ment in Somerset house is that devoted to the filing
of wills; and as might be supposed the collection is
immense, varied and extraordinary, ranging from the
will of Shakespeare himself (containing practically the
only known autograph of the world-renowned poet) right
down to mere curiosities in wills, such as those carved
on the lid of a desk or contained within secret cabinets
or escrutoires.

Here for twenty-five cents one may inspect the will
of any British person. There are wills leaving immense
sums to cats and dogs; wills written in human blood.
But the most interesting one has quite a romantic
history.

It is the will of a British official who died in Cairo of
the plague. Before his death he took care to prepare
his will upon parchment procured from the skin of a
freshly-killed goat; but as he handled this skin him-
self it was thought later on that the will might have
the power of transmitting the dreadful plague from
which its writer died. Accordingly, after having been
passed from hand to hand with somewhat disastrous
results in the way of plague and death, the will was
put into a bottle of spirits. Arrived at Somerset
house, the will was read to the next of kin and
deposited among the archives of the depart-
ment.